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## WAITING IN THE CHURCH.

A STORY IN THREE PARTS.

### PART I.—LOVE'S SHIPWRECK.

BROTHER JACK and I had been friends—close friends all our lives; and I take it that is more than most brothers could have said when they came to be, one of them thirty-two, and the other thirty. I don't mean to say we had had no rows; I don't mean to say we hadn't often sworn eternal enmity. I don't suppose many brothers would believe me if I did say so; and I don't think much of the brotherly love that never leads to quarrels. Thunder-storms in July don't prove that summer is winter; and, if you'll forgive a rough simile, that is a pretty fair illustration of my idea of life. Jack and I had certain fights when we were boys; and we got soundly thrashed by my father once or twice, by way of reward, when he found us out; but that never made us worse friends or worse brothers in the end. We were together at home till my father died, and then we were together at school till the day came for each to choose his way through the world; our tastes being less similar than our affections, he went out to India, to a Civil Service appointment that was opened to him by some electioneering influence of my Uncle Ben's; and I came up to 'walk the hospitals' in London.

We used to say at home that Jack was the lucky one of the family: he made his way wherever he went. When he and I were quite little fellows, if any of my father's friends came to see us, Jack was taken in hand and made much of, and became a favourite, long before any of the rest had had time enough to study the visitor, or to overcome that strange half-proud, half-timid bashfulness which belongs to most children. At school, Jack was always above me in the class; though neither he nor I could ever see that he knew more than I did. But the fact is, Jack has always worn his heart upon his sleeve; and his open, friendly, unsuspicious nature has got him a score of friends where others would find one.

We at home should have been a good deal surprised if we had not heard from India a continuous story of Jack's successes and Jack's good-fortune. Within five or six years, he made what seemed to us to be tremendous progress; while I was plodding along at a quiet, jog-trot pace, working hard to increase a small suburban practice I had thought myself lucky to get in that growing outskirts of London which surrounds the Swiss Cottage. He had gone up from step to step till his salary was what our dear old mother (who used to sigh and fear she should not live to see her boy come home any more) used to call 'quite a fortune.' Then there came a letter which very much fluttered the parental bosom, and made me envy Jack more than ever—a letter in which, with many blundering attempts to tell a straight story, and not a few awkward failures, and much incoherent wandering into irrelevant questions, he announced that he had come upon the greatest piece of good-fortune he hoped to have in this world, and was going to be married. He was going to marry a—it did not seem easy for Jack to say what he was going to marry; but, at the very least—a nymph, a saint, a Venus, and an angel all in one. If his description was to be taken as true, even with a ton of salt (not to mention such an insignificant modicum as a classical grain), nobody could doubt that, unless Jack had been the most distempered cynic in the world, instead of the merry-hearted enthusiastic fellow he was, he could not help being in the very loftiest height of human bliss.

'That boy is going to make a fool of himself, after all,' said my mother.

'Not a bit of it, mother,' said I, being much more sanguine than it was natural she should be as to Jack's wisdom in such matters.

'He is—I know he is,' persisted my mother. 'Why, see what a letter he has written! It's full of nonsense! What's all this he says about her "heavenly face"?' Heavenly face, indeed! I'll be bound it's some black creature that has bewitched the silly boy—some scheming hussy!

'Why, auntie, dear,' said my cousin Jenny, who could scarcely speak for the laughter to which this

vehement condemnation of Jack's enchanter provoked her, 'surely you don't think the ladies who go out to India all turn blackamoors? Besides, Cousin Jack has much more taste than that, I'm sure.'

'Taste, indeed!' ejaculated my mother, with a most contemptuous sniff and a portentous shake of the head. 'If he'd any taste at all, he'd just come home and marry you, as a decent Christian should.'

'La, auntie, I'm sure I don't want anybody to come and marry me; especially when he can have such a delightful, beautiful, graceful, accomplished, charming young lady as he describes, without any of the trouble of coming so many thousands of miles.'

I thought I detected a tone in Jenny's voice that did not altogether accord with her words. That Jenny should care in the least what kind of wife Jack might choose, was not quite pleasant to me. Of course, it was quite natural that my mother should be anxious about it; and necessarily I was of opinion that I had a right to be jealous of the character of my future sister-in-law. But—but Cousin Jenny was different; and I had some peculiar notions about Cousin Jenny, which might have accounted for the twinge at the heart-strings I experienced about this time, though I am afraid I could have given but a poor explanation of those notions, or of my right to own them.

'An Englishwoman! pish!' said my mother, when a further perusal of the letter had elicited this much about Jack's *inamorata*. 'What business would any decent, respectable Englishwoman have to go hunting a husband in such a place as that?' (My mother had, you see, somewhat vague ideas about the British possessions in Hindustan, and scarcely credited them with a civilised population, or any of the elements of what she termed Christian ways of living.) 'She's sure to be as yellow as a bandana handkerchief.'

So it was pretty clear that Jack would have received a strong expression of the maternal disapproval, if not a direct prohibition of the proposed alliance, had he not stated at the close of his letter that he intended to be married, and away to the hills to spend his honeymoon, before any reply could reach him from England. Under such circumstances, there was nothing for it but to send him a budget of congratulations and good wishes, and all kinds of motherly, sisterly, cousinly, and brotherly messages for our new relative, who was henceforth to be called amongst us 'Mrs Jack.' In due time, there came another letter, in which Jack's happiness was more demonstrative than ever, and his 'dearest Mary' sent her love to us all. There was a little note inside from 'dearest Mary' to my mother; and this, with a photograph which Jack sent her, as an evidence of his young wife's charms, did much to reconcile her to an arrangement which had interfered greatly with those plans which I suppose all good mothers must ever make for their children, whether the 'boys and girls' be puling in their cradles, or going down

the gentle hill-side beyond the table-land where the battle of life is fought.

In the meantime, my own prospects had very considerably improved, and I began to feel justified in looking forward to a venture, from which I had great hope of deriving rare advantages and contentment. One summer evening, when professional duties left me more at liberty than usual, Cousin Jenny and I took a walk amongst the fields at Kilburn, where now there are no longer country lanes and hedgerows, but only new roads and unromantic rows of stucco villas. 'Jenny,' said I, after a long silence, during which I had been screwing up my courage, 'do you know I've made up my mind to do something desperate?'

'Are you going to take some of your own medical advice, Ned? That will be dreadfully unprofessional, won't it?' asked Jenny, looking roughly at me from under the broad hat that provoked me by hiding so much of her pretty face.

'No, I don't know that I'm going to take anybody's advice, because there's only one person who could give me any worth having in this case, and that person, I'm afraid, won't give it honestly.'

'Then it's no friend of mine,' said Jenny.

'Yes, it is—a very particular friend of yours.'

'Oh, do tell me who it is—if only just on purpose that I may contradict you; for I'm sure no friend of mine is so dishonest.'

'I didn't say she was dishonest, Jenny, only in this case she might not.'

'She, sir? And pray, what do you want with a lady's advice? And who is the lady?'

'My cousin Jenny,' said I.

'Well, to be sure, Mr Ned, you're very complimentary! I wish I could give you some bad advice, just to pay you for your civility, sir. What in the world do you want to come to school to me about?'

'I'm thinking of following Jack's example.'

'What! going out to India? Nonsense, Ned; that's impossible.'

'I don't mean that.'

'Then whatever do you mean? Is it a riddle, that one may guess at three times?'

'I mean that I've been thinking very seriously about—about getting married,' said I.

'You, Ned!' cried Jenny, with as much amazement and delight as could well be expressed together in two such words and a very large allowance of notes of admiration. 'You, Ned! of all the people in the world? Why, what a sly fellow you must be! But do tell me who the lady is.'

'Don't you know?'

'Not at all. It's somebody I don't know, or I should have found it out before now. But I'm so glad—more than I can say. Oh, do tell me who she is!' and Jenny looked me full in the face with a pair of eager eyes that spoke her gladness and her impatience more eloquently than words.

'I've not asked her yet, Jenny.'

'Oh, never mind that! What does that matter?

You can ask her at once, and she's sure to say "Yes."

"Do you think so?"

"Of course, Ned. But—but—do tell me at once who she is, and her little foot tapped the ground, and she pinched my arm in her haste to know.

"Why, Jenny, my dear, who in the whole world should it be—but yourself!"

"Nonsense, Ned! You are only teasing me," she said, and a cloud came over her pretty face, and a film across her bright eyes.

"I'm not, indeed, love—it's your own dear self I want to be my wife," said I, trying to take her little hand in mine.

But Jenny turned away and burst into tears, and would not let me touch her.

"O Ned," she sobbed, "I'm so sorry!"

Then there came a silence, while the tears ran down her cheeks, and my mind was filled with bewildering, conflicting, agonising hopes and fears. Why was she sorry? I got courage to ask her at length.

"Because, Ned—dear cousin—it cannot be. I never thought you cared for me—in that way—at all; and—and I—I have not got a heart to give you."

So we turned by-and-by, and went home. How sad I was, words could not tell. The hope I had spoken to Cousin Jenny was no new thing: it had grown up with me from boyhood, and grown stronger every year; and now, when at length I had thought I might utter it, I found it was without foundation, and could never be more than a broken vision. Was I hasty, and wanting in proper consideration? I think so now; but I had no conception of it then; and even now I think it might not have been so well for me afterwards if I had been as wise when I asked Jenny to marry me as I am now. As it was, I went back to my powders and pills, to my prescriptions and patients, and tried altogether to forget my dream. Not that I succeeded: my dream would not be forgotten. How should it, when the girl I had wanted to make my wife was always in the same house with me? She was 'Cousin Jenny' still; but no longer the same kind of cousin to me. All the frank, artless gaiety of her manner with me was gone after that evening walk at Kilburn. My mother heard of it—I suppose from Jenny, who had been to her as one of her own daughters, ever since, at her own mother's death, she came to live with us. I heard, long afterwards, that they had a difference—almost a quarrel—about this mistake of mine. Jenny wanted to go away: she would make me uncomfortable by remaining, she said, and she did not wish to be a burden upon her aunt. But my mother very promptly put down this notion. "If Ned was foolish enough to keep his eyes shut, my dear," said my mother, "you are not to suffer for his foolishness. If I can't have you for my own daughter, Jenny, do you suppose I'm going to lose you as my niece? Of course, I should have been pleased if you could have agreed to take Ned—and Ned's a good boy, and deserves even as good a girl as you, Jenny—at least, that's his old mother's opinion, my dear. But it's a great deal better as it is, than it could have been if you had married him without loving him as a good wife should."

So Jenny staid with us as before, and I went on with my work as was needful, trying to think that a man may do his duty and go through the

world without any such special prospect to cheer him onward as I had too confidently set before myself in that vision of a home-kingdom, of which Jenny should be queen, sitting upon the throne of my heart. During a whole evening after my fruitless confession, all the change I observed was that while Jenny was more reserved she was more gentle towards me; and my mother was full of tenderness for Jenny, extending a little more watchful solicitude to me than had been her habit before.

The weeks and the months went by, and the winter came; and with the winter, a letter from my brother. Jack was coming home to shew his young wife to my mother; and, as the doctors said a long sea-voyage would be best for her ("She had been ill, and had lost her first-born, and was very much depressed, poor girl," he said), they would come round by the Cape, and hoped to be with us early in the summer. It puzzled me to find that my mother still seemed to cherish a dislike to 'Mrs Jack'; and that neither she nor Cousin Jenny shewed half the pleasure I expected them to feel in the prospect of this visit. But I was as blind as—well, as a man generally is about women's hearts. As for myself, I was glad enough; the prospect of seeing old Jack again, and making acquaintance with my charming sister-in-law (for of course Jack's wife must be charming and all that she should be, and I was not a bit affected by these good women's suspicions and jealousies), was simply delightful. I rejoiced in the anticipation of the pleasant reunion the summer would bring; and for a while I forgot the sorrow of my failure with Jenny.

After this letter arrived, we looked anxiously for the next, which should tell us exactly when the voyagers would start and when we might expect to see them. But January, February, March, April passed by, and there was nothing further; till one morning in May, when I was skimming the news-columns of the *Times* after breakfast, I came upon a paragraph which startled me. It was in the budget of intelligence brought by the Cape mail on the previous day.

"The bark *Star of the East*, from Bombay to London, foundered in a gale, off the north-east coast of Madagascar, on the 18th of March. She had on board, besides her crew of twenty-three hands, all told, six passengers for England: Captain Galbraith, 79th Regiment, and his daughter; Dr and Mrs Wilbraham; and Mr John Delisle, of the Civil Service, with Mrs Delisle. The master of the ship, and Mr Delisle, who were saved almost by a miracle, arrived here yesterday, in a most exhausted condition, and report the total loss of the rest of the passengers and crew of the unfortunate vessel."

So poor Jack was a widower, and was coming home to us without the wife of whom he had been so proud.

#### PART II.—A RESURRECTION.

There was very little time for sorrowing, or even for reflection. I had scarcely found my way through the sad duty of conveying to my mother and Cousin Jenny the tidings I had gathered from the newspaper, when there came a telegram from Jack to me, saying that he had landed at Plymouth with the mails, and would be in London that afternoon. In the evening, I had met him at Paddington,

and brought him home; the sorrowful greetings were over, and he and I were left alone for a while by the women-folk, talking of the past.

'Yes, Ned,' said Jack, 'I loved poor Mary with all my soul. Since I made her my wife, it seemed to me that I could ask the world no more than I had got; till the awful night when I lost her. The world! She was more to me than all the world, or a dozen worlds, could have been. And she went down, under an angry wave, in a storm at sea, when no man could give her help; and so I'm left alone!'

Poor Jack was scarcely himself—he found it hard to talk to me, or to my mother even, of the loss he had suffered. We thought it wisest to let him alone; and by degrees he told us all the story.

They had left Bombay early in March, or late in February, full of the pleasant expectation of fulfilling the promise of his letter—that they would spend the summer with us in Old England. Mary was in better spirits than when he last wrote to us: indeed, on the morning after they set sail from India, she was joyous beyond all his recollection of her, and made light of his fears lest the voyage might not be all an experience of pleasure. The early weeks of the journey were so many stages through a golden clime, with cerulean seas and ruby sunsets, and morning skies like hemispheres of mother-of-pearl, set with diamond stars. But, as they were approaching the coast of Africa, the weather changed, the barometer sank, and the wild east winds came upon them, seizing their ship, which was all the world to them, as a waif upon the sea, and driving them as a straw before the wintry breeze. Then poor tender Mary's spirits sank to zero. As the elements gathered round them in the ecstasy of wrath, she clung to her husband, and cried to him: 'Jack, my dearest, my own, my all, we shall not see our friends! These angry seas will swallow us! We shall die and be buried in their depths. But, Jack, dear, you will not leave me—we shall die together; and in the world to come we shall awake side by side.'

When my brother told me of this, describing, incidentally, the awful accompaniments of the storm—how the waters were engulfing them, as mountains rolling in angry waves, and every moment submerging the frail vessel in which was all their hope—how the heaven was black with rayless clouds that seemed to threaten as with the vengeance of the great eternal God—how the folded, close-reefed sails were stripped in ribbons from the yards, and the rigging strained, and wailed, and snapped, and the tall masts bent in the gale, and the ship drifted helplessly, defying the helm, and perplexing all calculations as to her course, while torrents of black-blue waters rushed and roared across her decks, and the old sailors quailed before the fury of the storm—the tears rolled down his cheeks, and I saw how deeply Jack had loved the woman who was gone, and how desolate this great calamity had left him.

'It was all over with us, Ned,' said he; 'the mainmast had gone overboard, and the water was rushing into the hold, through a hole staved in between the timbers by the great yard, that the billows were working like a battering-ram against the ship's side. The first boat was swung out over the bulwarks, and all the women but one were in it. I had seen Mary in, seated near the stern, with Captain Galbraith and the doctor, and Mrs Wilbraham, when the poor old captain, who was

beyond his wits, suddenly cried out: "Where's my daughter?" She had been left alone below; and what could I do but rush off with the steward to fetch her? When we came back, the boat had been lowered nearly to the water's edge; and just as we were trying to pass the poor girl into it, a big wave swept over us, carried her out of our arms, swept the steward over the side, and left me prostrate and powerless. I heard the cries of a dozen men around me, and staggered to my feet, only to see the shadow of the boat disappearing in the trough between two huge billows, one of which rose high aloft between us and the doomed ones; and that was the last I saw of poor, dear Mary! The night was pitch-black, and we had only seen them by the lights that struggled from the foremast and the mizzen-mast through the stormy gloom. All was over! How I had mind enough to follow the captain's orders after that awful parting—how I came to live at all, I shall never know; but next day, when the long waves were running low again, and the sun was shining hotly down from a cloudless sky, I found myself crouched by the captain's side, in an open boat, far out upon the ocean. There were others with us—two lay dead in the bottom of the boat, one lay dying, and the fourth was fast going mad. The hot tropical sun finished the work. The third man died before the evening; the fourth man, frantic, sprang overboard before the sun went down; and in the short twilight the captain threw the three corpses into the sea. The cool night-air restored me somewhat, and I slept; but when morning came, I suppose I was far gone in fever. I remember no more, till I found myself on board the ship that had picked us up, and was bringing us to the Cape. I owe my life to the captain; but, if it were not for mother and for you, Ned, I think I would rather have found a grave by Mary's side, in the depths of the Indian Ocean.'

It is scarcely necessary to explain how deep an impression this strange and melancholy adventure made upon us all at home. As for me, I mourned almost as much for poor Mary, cut off in the flower of her beauty and the dawn of her married life by so cruel a fate, as Jack himself, who had known her so much better, and loved her so dearly. As for Cousin Jenny, she wept true woman's tears as the story was told, and seemed to draw nearer to Jack and close to his heart, as though she would have healed the wound his sorrows had made, by the tenderness of her kind solicitude. And, as for my mother, she was silent and gentle, beyond all I had ever known of her; she spake never a hard word, such as she would have said if Jack had come home bringing his young wife with him; and she soothed his grief by all those loving arts that good women learn and practise from infancy to age.

Blind that I was! The summer wore away; the autumn glowed and faded; winter came, grew white and old, and passed us by; and still I saw not—never seemed to dream—what wreck was working all around my heart. One thing I noted—that the poignancy of my brother's sorrow melted away; and that, as the days grew between him and his misfortune, calm resignation, then quiet enjoyment, and at last high spirits, came to him. One evening in the early spring, I went home weary, after a long day's round amongst my patients, and I found my mother waiting for me in



the drawing-room. Jack was out, and Jenny had gone with him for a saunter in the green lanes—as she had gone with me—an age ago.

'Ned,' said my mother, 'I want to have a talk with you. If you are not too much tired, come out in the garden.'

So we went, and sat down in a quiet, shady arbour, beneath the trees.

'Did not my boy want to make Jenny his wife?' she said, while I was listlessly waiting to know why she had brought me there.

'Yes, mother,' I answered. 'I asked her, and I mean to ask her again.'

'It's too late, Ned,' said my mother.

'Too late! What do you mean, mother?' I asked, as a strong thrill of fear, half-conscious of danger, passed through me, body and mind.

She did not speak at once; but presently she said: 'Jenny is a good girl, Ned—however you might be mistaken in her, you would think that, my boy.'

'Good!—why, mother, there is no goodness I think too much for her. She is all truth and goodness; and if I wait a dozen years, I'll try to win her yet.'

'Yes, yes!' said my mother, with a touch of impatience in her voice; 'you don't think more of her than I do. But did it never seem to you that she loved some one more than you?'

The recollection of the evening at Kilburn came back to me, and I answered doubtfully: 'Yes, she told me so—when I asked her if—if she could love me.'

'She told you honestly—plainly, Ned?'

'O yes,' said I, gaining courage as my remembrance grew clearer—'yes, she told me. But, mother, I have hopes of overcoming all that. Whoever it was that she loved, he does not come to claim her; and she can't go on for ever dreaming of a love—if love it be, or aught more than a girlish fancy—when the man she has wasted half her heart upon does not care to ask for her. She cannot be insensible to my devotion to her; and I'm not too proud, mother, to take her with such affection as she can give me. I love her with all my soul; and I shall take courage, and ask again.'

'Poor Ned!' said my mother.

There was a depth of compassion in her voice that startled me; and when I looked at her, my heart took alarm from the expression of her gentle face.

'Why so poor, mother?' I asked her, trying to disguise my fears as I spoke. 'Don't fear but I shall succeed by-and-by. I can afford to be patient, and I shall persevere.'

'O Ned, Ned! did it never occur to you who it was that won your cousin Jenny's heart?'

'No, indeed,' I cried, excited at length by a sense of the loss I might have sustained—'no, indeed—I wish it had. He's some mean cur, who wins girls' hearts to break them, and to spoil the chance of honest men. I would that I could only'—

'Don't speak so, Ned,' said my mother quietly. 'It's your brother Jack.'

The words failed to convey their meaning to my mind. I thought my mother had broken off suddenly from the subject of our conversation.

'What's my brother Jack?' I asked her petulantly.

'Why, Ned, my boy, your brother Jack won

little Jenny's heart years ago, when you were all children together. I do not believe he knew how much he had won, or he would never have been false to her. He went away to India; and she, left here to think of him, loved him the more, in that he sent her not a single tender word all the time when her poor soul was yearning for him. Then he fell in love with another girl, and married her; and brave little Jenny bore it well, but was sorrowful enough, poor dear, as I saw well; and I was angry with Jack, because I knew how true a heart he had thrown so ruthlessly away.'

'But, mother,' said I, as all the truth of this began to dawn upon me, 'what does this matter now? Jack didn't love her, and he married another woman; and if what you tell me is true, she is free to be wooed and won by a more faithful heart.'

'Ah, Ned, my child,' said my mother tenderly, putting her hand on mine as she spoke, with a sad, sympathising tone in her voice, 'why have you shut your eyes to all that concerned your happiness? Did not Jack come home in sorrow, and without a wife, and before poor Jenny had had time to forget her love for him? And how could she fail to shew him, in his trouble, how much she cared for him? And how was he to be blind then to her love, or to keep down his old regard for her, as it grew up the stronger out of the ashes of his lost joy?'

I began to see it at last, and a wild sense of injury and wrong was growing up within me. She went on:

'Why, Ned, my dear, Jack has asked her to marry him and go back with him to India; and she has consented; and it will be all over in a month from now.'

Simple words enough, were they not? I ought to have been glad—glad that Cousin Jenny's love had found response at last, and glad that Brother Jack had come by some consolation for his trouble, and would not go back desolate to the far East. No doubt; but I was not glad. I was stricken, wounded cruelly, numbed with the weight of my new grief. I got up and walked away; feeling as Esau may have done when Jacob had cheated him out of his birthright—almost as Cain must have felt when Abel's offering was accepted by the Almighty, and his was rejected. What had I done, that my love should be trampled under foot? Why was Jack, who had had his joys, and won his bride, and known himself loved, to be rewarded for his sudden passing pain by the gift of that which I had spent my life in trying to win? These were the thoughts that troubled me, bewildered me, maddened me, and drove me out into the night, to wander far, alone, along the country roads.

The struggle was long, and keen, and terrible; but at length my better self prevailed. I was broken-hearted; but why kick against the pricks? The hope of my life was over; but should I therefore cast a chilling shadow on Jenny's joy? The best fortune that could fall to man had passed away from me; but need I, knowing this, be churlish, and refuse to be joyful in my brother's perfect happiness? With these reflections, I turned and went home. Jack was sitting by the study-fire, and his smile was glad and full. I stifled my selfishness, and congratulated him; and then I sat for hours and listened to the outpourings of his delight in the possession of that which should

have been mine. Jack—light-hearted, impulsive, impressionable child of the sunlight—never penetrated the gloom, the chill reserve, from which I could not, in spite of myself, escape. He was in an ecstasy. 'No doubt,' I thought bitterly, 'she was dreaming of the fulfilment of her hope and the return of her love. Well,' I said, 'so be it—I'll not be the spectre at the banquet: if you are happy, I'll seem happy too.'

'It will be all over in a month from now,' my mother had said truly. Of course, for Jack's leave was up, and he must be going back to his post. We might never see him again. Ten years he was away before; and what might not the next ten years bring with them?—for my mother, whose hair was white already with the gathering bloom of age?—for me, the elder brother, going onward to the graver scenes of life, without those sweet domestic ties that smooth the way so much for happier men?—for Jenny, passing away from her youth to her matronhood, and going to brave new climes for her love's sake?—and for Jack himself, entering on a new lease of joys and good fortune?

We had enough to think of—I, for one, had more than enough—during those few fleeting days. Shall I ever forget how lovingly Cousin Jenny tried to soften the grief I was too proud to confess—the grief that was too true and strong to be concealed from her keen sight?—how she strove, by a thousand little acts and words, to tell me how she would have loved me, but that her heart had been captive to another before I sought to win it for myself? There was little time or opportunity to think of such things then.

Very soon, three weeks had gone, and the wedding-morning came. They were to be married at St John's. Jack and I had moved to lodgings some days before; and Jenny and mother had had the house all to themselves for the last preparations. I rose early, fevered with the excitement of the crowding events and conflicting emotions through which I had passed, and arrayed myself in the garments in which I was to figure as Jack's 'best man.' There was a patient whom I must visit before the ceremony; and Jack was still in his room when I went out of the house. 'Half-past ten at the church door, Jack—prompt; now, don't forget!' I shouted from the foot of the staircase.

'All right! I'll be there,' said Jack.

I went and saw my patient; and at twenty minutes after ten I was ready in the porch. The minutes passed; and as the clock struck the half-hour I became uneasy, for Jack had not arrived. Five minutes, ten, fifteen, and yet he did not come. A carriage drove up; and I had to help out the bride and my mother.

Where was Jack? There was no sign of him. I rushed off as hard as I could go, hoping to meet him. The road was straight, and I could not miss him; but I reached the lodgings without a sight of the truant. 'Where on earth is my brother?' I cried to the landlady as I entered.

'He's up-stairs, in the sitting-room, and there's a lady with him,' was the answer.

'A lady! What lady?'

'Unposible for me to say, sir,' said the landlady, with a disdainful and significant toss of the head.

I rushed up-stairs, and, waiting for no thought of ceremony, entered the room. There sat Jack, with his head bowed down upon his arms on the table;

and kneeling at his feet was a woman—a strangely beautiful, pale-faced woman—in tears. I halted, but only for a moment, for I had no clue to this strange scene. 'Come, Jack,' I cried—'come along, my boy. They're waiting for you—WAITING IN THE CHURCH.'

Jack lifted his face, and looked at me with an awful smile—a smile of agony, but not of joy, and he said, putting his hand softly on the woman's brow: 'Ned, this is my wife—come back to me from the grave.'

#### HEREDITARY TALENT.

WHOEVER likes 'a book with a purpose,' will welcome Mr Galton's work on *Hereditary Genius*,\* since what he proposes to shew is no less than 'that a man's natural abilities are derived by inheritance under exactly the same limitations as are the form and physical features of the whole organic world; and consequently, as it is easy, notwithstanding these limitations, to obtain by careful selection a permanent breed of dogs or horses gifted with peculiar powers of running, or of doing anything else, so it would be quite practicable to produce a highly gifted race of men by judicious marriages during several consecutive generations.' Instead, therefore, of 'marriages of affection,' or 'convenience,' or of marriages being 'made in heaven,' they ought to be arranged by some competent tribunal, who shall decide the case upon its merits: whether Corydon is appropriate to Chloe, and *vice versa*, and whether their issue is likely to be such as to advantage the general community. Under this happy and philosophic system, we shall no more hear of a lady 'throwing herself away' upon an unworthy object. *Locksley Hall* will have no further interest save as an example of what used to happen in an age of unreason; clever men will no more suffer under the proverbial stigma of 'always marrying stupid women;' and when we give a dinner-party, we shall no more regret that the usages of society prevent our inviting a gentleman's better-half without himself. Imagine foolish Charles's indignation with the philosophic parent of his Belinda at being refused leave to court her, upon the ground that his phrenological development is unsuitable! Imagine Belinda's regret that she was ever cursed with brains! But, on the other hand, what a magnificent ambition would that now contemptible desire 'to found a family' become! It will be no longer a vulgar wish to perpetuate the name of Robinson, but to bequeath to a grateful country in perpetuity the wit, the humour, the administrative talents, or the power of multiplying four figures by four figures in one's head, which is now the attribute of Master Jack Robinson only, and may be lost for ever by a *mésalliance* with a dull heiress!

Why Mr Galton, who, throughout this most interesting volume, is so careful to use the most precise and exact terms to express his meaning, should have selected the word *Genius*, for what is,

\* *Hereditary Genius*. By Francis Galton. Macmillan.

by his own shewing, mere Talent, we cannot conjecture. Among the myriads of instances which he adduces to corroborate his view of this matter of hereditary descent, there are not half-a-dozen that apply to what is commonly understood by the term genius, and unless we substitute talent for that word, his whole argument, as it seems to us, is well nigh objectless. However, he leaves us in no doubt of what he is really driving at; and even *that*—if there was nothing else in the volume worthy of commendation, and there is very much—is a most satisfactory and unusual feature in a work that is calculated to regenerate the world. His general plan is to shew that, in the great majority of cases, men of high ability have eminent kinsfolk, and for this purpose he discusses the relationships of a vast number of illustrious intellectual persons—judges, statesmen, commanders, men of literature, poets, painters, and so forth, with a supplementary chapter, by way of comparison, with the hereditary transmission of physical gifts on oarsmen and wrestlers. It is not our intention to go into these tables of affinity, on which, however, it is plain that he has spent enormous pains, and the most conscientious diligence. We will grant at once, what we should never have been disposed to deny, that many eminent men—and even the majority of them—may reckon among their forefathers or descendants other fairly eminent personages, both male and female. But it is also to be remarked, that unless for Mr Galton's curiosity and research in this matter, the world at large would not have been conscious in most cases of the 'eminence' of the forefathers in question; some, indeed, rise just sufficiently ahead of their contemporaries to catch the reflex of their descendants' glory, but there is seldom anything of individual mark about them; no more particular talent than would perhaps be found among the progenitors of any human being whose biography it was proposed to write with insufficient material, and whose family genealogy had consequently to be laid under contribution. It is a favourite satirical observation to remark that a man never had a grandfather, and we allow it its full force and elegance as a depreciatory observation; but, as a matter of fact, every one of us have had relatives of that particular kind, and also great ones, and great-great ones. The mere *discovery* of them is the result of an inquiry that commonly costs a good deal of money, which is not at everybody's command, and to the lack of that vulgar commodity (in combination with the vulgar idea that they are timber of no great intrinsic value) is alone to be ascribed the fact that we have not all our family trees. The last animate bundle of rags left at the workhouse door—the pauper baby abandoned yesterday in the streets—is not only our own flesh and blood in the sense used by our present premier, but somewhere or other—perhaps very high up indeed—links with the noblest families on earth, and certainly has in its veins, if not 'the blood of all the Howards,' the blood of those who lived and died a thousand years before a Howard was heard of. So far from being impressed with Mr Galton's conclusions in this respect, it seems to us that any man—whose race has been tolerably prolific—might well think himself

aggrieved, if ranging from his great-grandfather to his great-grandson, and searching about among the many relatives included in that vast area, he did not find a man sufficiently eminent to be instanced by our author (had he occasion to use him) as a proof of hereditary descent.

Again, what seems to us exceedingly to weigh against Mr Galton's view of the matter, is that among the descendants of his (really) Eminent Man, we not only find personages of greater eminence than among his forefathers, but many more of them; which it is surely not begging the question to suggest might be owing to the said eminent man's having stretched out to them a helping hand. So intelligent a writer as Mr Galton has, of course, not lost sight of this objection to his theory altogether; but he has, in our judgment, made much too light of it. Nay, with a boldness that treads close upon audacity, he has instanced the judges of England as the strongest proof of what he would fain have us believe. The judges of England, says he, as I shew you by my tables, have had a most extraordinary number of eminent and illustrious relatives: but what he does shew us by his tables (and what we quite expected to see) is, that the judges of England have had a most extraordinary number of relatives also judges, or otherwise distinguished in the law. 'The law,' said Sydney Smith, 'is open to rich and poor alike—like the *London Tavern*.' And the profession of the law is certainly open to everybody; but as for mere talent making its way therein against interest in a general way, no error can be more ludicrous; a man with a musket manufactured upon the old models, might as well enter for a shooting-match against another with the Chassepot, as one armed only with good brains against the son of a judge. Of course, a few men have enjoyed such natural advantages as to cause them to triumph over even these odds; the examples Mr Galton instances of such are just sufficiently numerous to prove the rule which he would fain ignore; but their descendants had no such obstacles to contend against, and it is no wonder that we find them in great legal situations. Let us take Mr Galton's first page of judges in illustration of our argument. The names are Atkyns (four distinct families), Bathurst, Bedingfield, Best, and Bickersteth. Among these we find no less than nine Chief-justices, fourteen Barons of the Exchequer, three other judges, one Master of the Rolls, and three Readers in Lincoln's Inn. And against these thirty, just three other descendants 'eminent'—and not very much so, neither—in other callings than that of the law: General Sir William Draper, 'the well-known antagonist of Junius,' 'a famous physician,' and Earl Bathurst, 'an accomplished wit.' The six-and-twenty Atkynses were all lawyers; and of them it may certainly be said that they possessed a most extraordinary hereditary genius—for getting on at the bar. It is curious to see how recklessly even a wise man will ride when once he has mounted his hobby-horse. If Mr Galton would prove his case, there is nothing for him here but to push his principles even further, and to maintain that not only is talent transmitted, but always the same particular kind of talent—such as legal acumen; though even that ground would only be tenable on the supposition that nepotism and interest were infinitely less concerned in the affair than they



really are. It was no wonder (when once he had surmounted these little objections to his theory in his own mind, and was resolved to take the field) that our author made his strong point of the judges, for the examples of so-called 'hereditary' talent are far more numerous among them than elsewhere. Among the poets, for example, we do not find genius—true genius here—by any means so hereditary; it does not seem to be so catching on Parnassus as in Lincoln's Inn. It is found difficult to fit them with eminent relations, and the 'eminence' is of a more doubtful character, even when found and made a note of. There is nothing, for instance, adduced in evidence of the illustrious character of Lord Byron's father, except that he was 'imprudent and vicious;' or of that of his mother, beyond the fact that she was 'proud, passionate, and half-mad;' nor is it to be held satisfactory proof of the transmission of hereditary genius that Heinrich Heine's first cousin 'succeeded his father in the management of his affairs.' The conclusion, in fact, which is forced upon us, notwithstanding all our author's eloquence and ingenuity, is this: that where the species of eminence in a man is of a practical sort, and such as involves power and patronage, we do find among his descendants and relatives many examples of a certain eminence, even of an eminence as great as his own (though reached with far less of difficulty); whereas where the sort of eminence is not of a material kind, and does not command any such advantages, it is not transmitted so often as to excite the least surprise. The nearer it approaches to what is called Genius (and taking into account, of course, the rarity of the gift, in comparison with that of mere talent), the less it seems to possess of a hereditary character; though, even here, we grant that some similar traits are recognisable in the descendants, and especially in the immediate ones, of an exceptionally great man.

If we turn to the table *Literary Men* in Mr Galton's book, for instance, we find that the talent for writing books runs much in a family—'runs in the blood,' as says the proverb, and as our author maintains, whereas it does nothing of the kind. The exceptional calling of literature is as capable as another of being pursued—after a fashion—by anybody. When papa lives by his pen, it is only natural that the children should endeavour to use it for their livelihood. They catch 'the trick' of authorship; they may even learn from him to address the public in a taking way, and so they become in some sort authors themselves, even of sufficient repute to appear in a genealogical table where their presence is most earnestly desired by a gentleman with a theory. If they really have any literary talent, it would be doubtless fostered and encouraged under such circumstances; but their eminent papa could never succeed in hauling them up to his own pedestal—as he could do if he were on the bench of judges—or bid them succeed him there, examples to all posterity of Hereditary Genius.\*

\* In reference to literary men, Mr Galton contrasts the position of English and American authors, to illustrate his view that high ability is irrepressible. 'Culture is far more widely spread in America than with us, and the education of their middle and lower classes far more advanced; yet, for all that, she does not beat us in first-class literature, &c. The number of her first-class authors

Though we differ altogether from Mr Galton's conclusions, the facts which he has collected with such careful zeal are very interesting, and the manner he has gone to work to procure them most ingenious. He takes a book called *Men of the Time*, which catalogues, biographically, all really eminent personages in all callings. On looking over the book, I am surprised to find how large a proportion of the "Men of the Time" are past middle age. It appears that in the cases of high (but by no means in that of the highest) merit, a man must outlive the age of fifty to be sure of being widely appreciated. It takes time for an able man, born in the humbler ranks of life, to emerge from them, and to take his natural position. It would not, therefore, be just to compare the numbers of Englishmen in the book with that of the whole adult male population of the British Isles; but it is necessary to confine our examination to those of the celebrities who are past fifty years of age, and to compare their number with that of the whole male population who are also above fifty years. I estimate, from examining a large part of the book, that there are about eight hundred and fifty of these men, and that five hundred of them are decidedly well known to persons familiar with literary and scientific society. Now, there are about two millions of adult males in the British Isles above fifty years of age; consequently, the total number of the "Men of the Time" are as four hundred and twenty-five to a million, and the more select part of them as two hundred and fifty to a million.' Another estimate gave much the same result. 'I took the obituary of the year 1868, published in the *Times* on January 1, 1869, and found in it about fifty names of the more select class. This was in one sense a broader, and in another a more rigorous selection than that which I have just described. It was broader, because I included the names of many whose abilities were high, but who died too young to have earned the wide reputation they deserved; and it was more rigorous, because I excluded old men who had earned distinction in years gone by, but had not shewn themselves capable in later times to come again to the front. On the first ground, it was necessary to lower the limit of the age of the population with whom they should be compared. Forty-five years of age seemed to me a fair limit, including, as it was supposed to do, a year or two of broken health preceding decease. Now, two hundred and ten thousand males die annually in the British Isles above the age of forty-five; therefore the ratio of the more select portion of the "Men of the Time," on these data, is as fifty to two hundred and ten thousand, or as two hundred and thirty-eight to a million. Thirdly, I consulted obituaries of many years back, when the population of these islands was much smaller, and they appeared to me to lead to similar conclusions—namely, that two hundred and fifty to a million is an ample estimate.'

And here follows a short but very striking

is more limited even than with us.' Just so; but the reasons for this lie in those very 'circumstances' the power of which to repress ability Mr Galton denies. There being no international copyright law, literature (save that of the newspaper press) is a profession few embrace, because, the works of English authors being procured for nothing, the publishers are naturally unwilling to pay money for native talent.



dissertation upon what is really represented by that number 'a million,' about which we talk so glibly, without in the least appreciating its excessive magnitude. 'It is well to have a standard: mine will be understood by many Londoners; it is as follows: One summer day I passed the afternoon in Bushey Park, to see the magnificent spectacle of its avenue of horse-chestnut trees, a mile long, in full flower. As the hours passed by, it occurred to me to try to count the number of spikes of flowers facing the drive on one side of the long avenue—I mean all the spikes that were visible in full sunshine on one side of the road. Accordingly, I fixed upon a tree of average bulk and flower, and drew imaginary lines—first halving the tree, then quartering, and so on, until I arrived at a subdivision that was not too large to allow of my counting the spikes of flowers it included. I did this with three different trees, and arrived at pretty much the same result: as well as I recollect, the three estimates were as nine, ten, and eleven. Then I counted the trees in the avenue, and, multiplying all together, I found the spikes to be just about one hundred thousand in number. Ever since then, whenever a million is mentioned, I recall the long perspective of the avenue of Bushey Park, with its stately chestnuts, clothed from top to bottom with spikes of flowers, bright in the sunshine, and I imagine a similarly continuous floral band of ten miles in length.'

Two hundred and fifty out of a million is one out of four thousand, and here again Mr Galton brings vividly before us how high is this standard of intellectual 'eminence' he has chosen. Four thousand is a very large number—difficult for persons to realise who are not accustomed to deal with great assemblages. 'On the most brilliant of starlight nights, there are never so many as four thousand stars visible to the naked eye at the same time; yet we feel it an extraordinary distinction to a star to be accounted as the brightest in the sky.' It is only with these brightest and most particular human stars with whom Mr Galton concerns himself in this volume. It is impossible to transfer his elaborate calculations to our pages, but he certainly seems to prove conclusively that 'eminently gifted men are raised as much above mediocrity as idiots are depressed below it: a fact that is calculated to considerably enlarge our ideas of the enormous differences of intellectual gifts between man and man.' Mr Galton has been privately furnished by a Cambridge examiner with the actual marks given to each candidate for mathematical honours in a certain year. The first, a senior wrangler, got 7634; the second, 4123; and the lowest man in the list only 237. 'Consequently, the senior wrangler who got more than thirty-two times as many as the lowest man, could grapple with problems more than thirty-two times as difficult; or, when dealing with subjects of the same difficulty, but intelligible to all, would comprehend them more rapidly in perhaps the square root of that proportion.' These marks, we are reminded, even do injustice to the best men, since a large portion of the examination-time is taken up by the mechanical labour of writing, so that their mental superiority is even greater. And when we consider that these honour-men are the flower of the undergraduate (mathematical) intellect, themselves the picked youth of the schools

of England, the mental position of senior wrangler with respect to his ordinary fellow-creatures is (mathematically) towering indeed.

Macaulay was able to recall many pages of hundreds of volumes by various authors, which he had acquired by simply reading them over. An average man could not certainly carry in his memory one thirty-second—ay, or one-hundredth—part as much as Macaulay. This will be unpalatable news for the majority of the human race—that is, the mediocrity, an illustration of which class is thus pithily described. 'The meaning of the word mediocrity admits of little doubt. It defines the standard of intellectual power found in most provincial gatherings, because the attractions of a more stirring life in the metropolis and elsewhere are apt to draw away the other classes of men, and the silly and the imbecile do not take a part in the gatherings. Hence the residuum that forms the bulk of the general society of small provincial places is commonly very pure in its mediocrity.' Though this may not be displeasing to 'friends round St Paul's,' we doubt whether it would be a welcome remark to open conversation with down in the country.

If the mediocrities are likely to have the conceit taken out of them by Mr Galton, he has, on the other hand, a good word for the idiots. Thirty per cent. of idiots and imbeciles, he tells us, put under suitable instruction, have been taught to conform to social and moral law, and rendered capable of order, of good feeling, and of working like the *third* of an average man; while more than forty per cent. have become capable of the ordinary transactions of life under friendly control: of understanding moral and social abstractions, and of working like *two-thirds* of a man.

The science of numbers has rarely been put in a more striking and intelligible form than by Mr Galton; however dull and bald a subject may be, it is sure, thanks to his skilful treatment, to wear a tolerably prepossessing aspect; so that the volume will be found interesting even by those who are accustomed to shun philosophy as dry reading. With his conclusions, as we have said, we are wholly unable to agree. We should be very willing to do so if we could. What an admirable arrangement might our hereditary aristocracy become if, in the first place, we gave titles to really great men; and secondly, if their greatness were hereditary! Eminence is not recognised in that way at present, except in the case of lawyers and of a few military men; nine out of ten of our peerages are bestowed for party purposes upon party men; but we have Mr Mill's word for it that even when a man of great intelligence is ennobled, his issue in the second, if not in the first generation, are so far from inheriting his intellectual qualities, that they are almost invariably found among 'the stupid party.' Mr Galton defends the system of hereditary aristocracy—of course, supposing that the said aristocrats were really 'eminent'—on two grounds: first, that the future peer is reared in a home full of family traditions, that form his disposition; and secondly, that he is presumed to inherit the ability of the founder of the family. Unhappily, both these arguments are presumptions. At the same time, it is only fair to state that our author is very far from reverencing mere rank without what he conceives to be the guinea-stamp of near relationship to an eminent

personage. 'I cannot think of any claim to respect put forward in modern days that is so entirely an imposture, as that made by a peer on the ground of descent, who has neither been nobly educated, nor has any eminent kinsman within three degrees.'

## GWENDOLINE'S HARVEST.

### CHAPTER XV.—DOWN GLENDALLACK.

At the same moment wherein Gwendoline became conscious that Piers Mostyn, and not Mr Blackett, was sitting beside her in the car, the machine was suddenly brought to a full stop, for the purpose of lighting the candles which, in the open air, would at once have been extinguished. Even when all were provided with these beacons, they did little more than make the rugged roof immediately above them visible, and cast a feeble glimmer upon the wet walls. When Miss Blackett turned round to ejaculate: 'Horrible; is it not, Alec?' she would not, perhaps, have discovered that Alexander had decided upon limiting his conquests to the earth's surface, and had left the guardianship of her friend to another; Piers, not knowing what line to take, remained silent, but Gwendoline replied promptly for him: 'Your brother is not here; he was afraid of catching cold, I suppose.'

'Oh, I see; one of the workmen has taken his place. Well, perhaps it's better so, my dear. You will be in safer hands, for Alec is quite unfitted for these sort of expeditions: I told him so when he proposed it.—O my goodness! Mr Kerr' (and she gave her neighbour a most genuine squeeze), 'if we ain't going lower still!'

Considering that they had only just entered the mine, this was not to be wondered at; but the fact was, as poor Miss Blackett subsequently observed, 'she had seemed to have passed a lifetime in the dreadful place already,' and could do nothing throughout the journey but pinch Mr Kerr, and say her prayers. Her attention and that of her companion being thus entirely absorbed, Piers and Gwendoline were left to converse almost as freely as if they had been alone, except for the brakesman and his assistant, who had other matters to engage their minds.

'How dare you come here, Piers?'

'Because I love you, dearest. Orpheus went down to a similar locality—to see his wife; and I have come here to see *you*. I really could not resist it, my own darling.'

Gwendoline did not withdraw her hand from his warm pressure—she could not deny herself so great a pleasure; but her tone had much resentment in it still, as she replied: 'It was a most dangerous and foolish thing to do, Piers. Does any one know of your being here?'

'Not a soul save the brakesman behind us, and he does not know who I am. I said I wished to go down the mine, and they gave me this dress, and bade me wait for the next car. If "Alec" (who's Alec?) had not got out, I should have come down the ladder, and taken my chance of seeing you. How beautiful you look with that star upon your forehead, like a goddess.'

'Do I? I cannot return the compliment: Miss Blackett took you for one of the workmen.'

'Bless her. So will everybody else, I hope. I wish I was a workman; that is, if you were also

employed on the same level. I could travel to the centre of the earth like this, and enjoy it beyond everything.'

'Could you?' Gwendoline was pouting; but he missed that from the insufficient supply of light. 'Then you cannot be much devoted to scenery.'

'I see your face, darling, and that is the fairest scene to be beheld upon earth—or beneath it. Confound it! we are stopping again. These people will insist upon our going to look at something.'

Never was explorer of mine so easily satisfied as Piers Mostyn. He would have been content to have been lowered through scores of miles of mere tunnel, and then dragged up again. He wished to see nothing but the face beside him—to hear nothing but that voice, which was certainly growing less resentful, and even almost tender towards him. But Science is a severe schoolmistress, who has no patience with such ridiculous follies, and must be listened to whenever she speaks. The brakesman's assistant had had his orders to 'explain Glendallack' to the distinguished visitors of the day, and he conscientiously did it. It was like hearing a lecture at the Polytechnic. But never had those instructive walls contained so unheeded an audience. Miss Blackett was otherwise engaged, as we know, and could not listen. Mr Kerr had shares in the mine, and knew all about it. Gwendoline was staring straight before her, looking (if there had been light enough to see) haggard rather than bored: she almost wished that the rope would break, and the enigma of her life be solved in that fashion. Piers, beneath his silken moustache, was muttering curses in the Parisian tongue. The brakesman's assistant having premised that he was unaccustomed to speak in public, discoursed with a fluency that could only have been acquired by constant practice. He had himself a smattering of science, and had invented something—a pump, or a valve, or a coupling-chain—of which he had a model at home, and would be happy to shew it to the ladies and gentlemen when they got above ground.

'Ah, if ever we do,' sighed Miss Blackett. She was a thrifty soul, but she would have given ten golden guineas at that moment to have been in a position to behold the model referred to. Happy Alec! He was a coward, but not a fool; he was on *terra firma*, and not under it. How she hated Mr Kerr, who must have known where he was bringing her to! Heaven might forgive him, but she certainly did not make that special request in his favour. Why was it so frightfully hot, and what was that which was dropping on her head and shoulders from the roof? She interrupted the torrent of the lecturer's eloquence, to ask these two questions.

'Well, mum, as for the heat, that is said to arise from our propinquity to a very hot place indeed.'

'Great Heaven deliver us!' exclaimed Miss Blackett fervently.

'No, mum; it is not the place you are thinking on: I was referring to the Central Fire. The warm air we are breathing, however, although inconvenient to parties unaccustomed to it, is not hurtful. As for the iron drippings, they are quite harmless.'

'But what do they come from, man?' urged the poor lady.

'Well, they come from the sea, mum: we are half a mile out or more under the waves. The faint hollow boom you would hear—if you were to listen very quiet—is the noise of the sea above your head.'

'Just so, my man,' said Mr Kerr with the patronising tone of a proprietor. 'Now, will you tell us how many feet of rock, in the roof here, lie between us and the water?'

'Well, where you are pointing, sir, about six feet; but where that wooden plug is put, *not above three*. If I was to knock it away this moment'—

An agonised cry broke forth from Mr Kerr. 'My dear Miss Blackett, you ran a pin into me!'

'I know I did,' exclaimed that lady with the calmness of despair; 'and I'll do it again, if you don't make that man leave off, and instantly take us up again. You ought to be ashamed of yourself for bringing ladies into such a place at all. The idea of one's trusting to a wooden plug! I am sure I have turned quite gray within the last five minutes.'

If Mr Kerr had had any action at law brought against him by the lady, on the ground of this personal damage to her charms, it is possible he might have produced witnesses to prove that she was turning gray some time previous to her descent into Glendallack; but he was much too gallant as well as prudent to hint at anything of the sort just now.

'My dear madam,' answered he, 'I assure you there is not the slightest danger. People are working all along yonder gallery, and do so every day, just as safely as though they were digging potatoes in their own gardens: nobody gets so far as this down the mine without leaving the carriage and going to see them. We must take back with us some memento of our visit, in the shape of a bit of tin or copper ore. Come—let me give you my arm—and see the specimens hammered out with our own eyes.'

'I don't move one step out of this car for all the wealth of Golconda; and you don't either, Mr Kerr,' added Miss Blackett hastily: 'I am not going to be left alone in this place for a single instant.—What do you say, Miss Treherne? You have had enough of these dreadful proceedings, I am sure: no young woman with any sense of propriety would wish for any more; with the candles all guttering down as they are, and not likely to last a bit longer than we want them to do.'

'I am quite at your service, Miss Blackett,' said Gwendoline quietly. 'It is a matter of perfect indifference to me whether we remain or return.'

'Then let us go back at once, man,' exclaimed Miss Blackett.

'Just as you please, mum,' returned the brakesman's assistant. 'Only, if you won't go to the workings, you will never be sure that the specimen you buy above ground was really found here. But I'll just knock you down a lump or two from the roof'—

Again a cry of irrepressible agony broke forth from the unhappy Mr Kerr. 'This confounded woman—that is, I mean this lady here,' said he, correcting himself, 'is exceedingly timid, my man. Give the signal to draw up at once—*immediately*—do you hear me?'

'I am sorry if I have hurt you,' said Miss Blackett, reserving her apology until the machine

began sensibly to ascend; 'but I really couldn't help it: I would have done the same if it had been the lord-lieutenant.'

'I wish it *had* been the lord-lieutenant, madam, with all my heart,' returned Mr Kerr viciously, and continuing to rub his leg, for the pin had, this time, hurt him exceedingly.

Nature is often complimented upon making so many folks, and yet none of them (save her twins) altogether similar in feature; but the variety of character with which she dowers us is infinitely greater. Even twins are sometimes of totally opposite dispositions.

The little car that was now toiling up from the depths of Glendallack was bringing what auctioneers call 'a very mixed lot' to join their fellows above ground. That Mr Kerr was of the same flesh and blood as his companion, she indeed had proved to his great inconvenience; but beyond that they had scarcely anything in common. He was a gambler in railway and mining shares, and speculative even in his religious opinions. She was prudent and orthodox, but devoted to sixpenny loo, from which he shrank, as being an immoral dissipation. The brakesman, again, who had been specially imported from a distance, on account of his great gifts in his particular line, was almost as much a machine as the invention he controlled and admired as the perfection of human skill; while his companion and assistant was a Brunel in embryo, dissatisfied with every mechanical institution as ineffectual, and only not guilty of ruining railway companies with his ingenious novelties, because the opportunity had not as yet been afforded him.

The applause of board-room meetings to command,  
The threats of loss and ruin to despise,

his lot forbade; but he yearned to wade through treasure to the throne of chief-engineer, and to shut the gates of Economy on the British shareholder.

Like the ham of the sandwich, Piers and Gwendoline, between these two differing pairs, most certainly partook of the qualities of neither; nor, perhaps, though they had a common interest in life, which the others lacked, were their characters, on the whole, more similar.

'I am glad to have seen you, and pressed your hand, dear Gwendoline, at all events,' murmured Piers. 'This must last me for some time, I suppose.'

Passionately as Gwendoline loved this man, it was perhaps a part of her punishment for doing so that her keen eyes were not closed to his faults—that is, to those shortcomings, which, measured even by the moral standard which *she* used, were faults. She well knew that he was inordinately selfish; but that phrase of his, 'last me,' just as she was about to part from him on the cross-road of life, sent a chill to her very heart. Her silence, and the sudden relaxing of the fingers which lay in his grasp, at once informed him of his error.

'Dearest Gwendoline,' continued he tenderly, 'do not think me selfish, for you and I—as it seems to me—are one. When far away from you, I have only the recollection of you to comfort me: I seem but half myself, and that the worse half. When—when may I hope to see you again?'

'I do not know, Piers; perhaps never. I wish that I could die this moment—thus, with my hand



in yours.' She was dreadfully agitated: she was trembling in every limb for the love and the loss of him; and he knew it.

'No, no, dearest; you shall live on. We will be happy together yet: do not doubt it. When—when are you coming to town?'

'Papa and I go, the beginning of next month. Mr Ferrier follows us, with the children. The marriage is to take place on the 20th.'

'And I am not to see you betwixt this and then?'

'Certainly not, Piers. If you have one single spark of genuine love for me, you will avoid me, not only betwixt now and then, but for months to come. We shall be in Italy for a long time. I will write to you; but you must not write to me. It is a small thing enough to ask of you, Piers, in return for much; but will you promise me *that*?'

'I will, dear; I do. But you will think of me; you will not forget me, Gwendoline?'

'Forget you? No, Piers.—Ah me!' (she muttered to herself) 'would to Heaven I could!'

'You are shivering, dearest: I trust this confounded place has not given you cold. I feel the draught myself: we must be getting near the daylight. I do not say good-bye, darling—*au revoir*.'

Their hands parted with a tender squeeze, and not a moment too soon. The candles began to pale, the gloom to thicken, the fresh salt air to make itself felt. Amid the sound of beating waves, and blowing winds, and cheering human voices, the car was drawn up to the platform whence it had started. An immense crowd welcomed their arrival; among whom, though modestly keeping in the second rank, were Mr and Mrs Samuel Barland, the latter of whom always made a point of patronising all entertainments that were gratuitous.

'You are looking rather white, Miss Treherne,' said Mr Kerr, as he assisted her to alight. 'I trust you were not as frightened as Miss Blackett; though, if you were, I am sure you behaved yourself better.—Hollo! what has become of your friend Brakesman, here is something for yourself, and for your assistant also; and, although as it happened there was nothing for him to do, here is a couple of shillings for the other workman. He has mixed with the rest, and I can't tell one man from the other; but you will see he gets it.'

None present had the slightest suspicion that Gwendoline had gone down Glendallack with Piers Mostyn sitting by her side. Mrs Barland, however, did remark, as her husband and herself trudged home together that afternoon: 'Yon was a bonnie laddie that took Mr Blackett's place by Miss Treherne, eh? Did you ever see him before?'

'I daresay,' was Mr Barland's careless reply. 'There's a matter of six hundred men as works at Glendallack, and most of 'em comes to our shop when their insides wants looking to. You're a nice young woman, you are, to be so curious about "bonnie laddies," and only a six months' bride yourself! I am downright ashamed of you, Susan.' But he did not look ashamed of her by any means, but regarded her, head aside, with complacent criticism, as an investment with which he had every reason to be satisfied.

'Nay, it wasn't so much his bonnie face that took me, Sam. But I thought it unco strange that he should have flitted away without staying to get his siller from Mr Kerr.'

Mr Samuel Barland's philosophic face relaxed into a smile, and his gray eyes twinkled with merriment, as he tapped the ashes out of his pipe, and observed approvingly: 'It's plain ye come from the far north, Susan.'

#### CHAPTER XVI.—GOLDEN OPINIONS.

In a few weeks, Bedivere Court and Glen Druid were both occupied only by servants on board-wages. Sir Guy and Gwendoline, and Mr Ferrier and his children, were all in town. The baronet and his daughter took quiet lodgings in St James's Place, but communicated with none of their fashionable friends. The bridegroom elect knew scarcely any one in London, and of course passed most of his time with the Trehernes. When Marion and little 'Eady' (which was the general love-term for Edith) accompanied him, they did not find themselves at all *de trop*, as usual in such cases; and indeed Gwendoline adored them a very genuine welcome. Their presence was an immense relief to her, though Mr Ferrier naturally enough did not take that view of the matter, but admired her more than ever for her devotion to his little ones. He even spoke of it with enthusiasm to Sir Guy over their claret, and thereby afforded that acute gentleman an opportunity, as he thought, of diplomatically introducing a certain delicate subject.

'Yes, my dear Ferrier,' said he, 'it is evident enough that Gwendoline adores your motherless little ones; and, indeed, although she has generally great command over her feelings—as the Trehernes have always had—she can never speak of them to me without emotion. Do I conjecture right in supposing that you will appoint her—who will certainly be their natural protector—their legal guardian?'

Mr Ferrier's cheek flushed up a little: he was never quite at his ease with the baronet, and shrank from giving him the least offence. Moreover, the suggestion just made to him had, it was probable, been proposed to her father by Gwendoline herself, which rendered a refusal still more embarrassing. But for all his affection for his bride elect, which was excessive, and of that devotional sort which is scarcely seen save where there is great disparity of age, Mr Ferrier did not hesitate in what he felt to be the path of duty. He was liberal, and even lavish, notwithstanding Mr Samuel Barland's remark on folks from the far north; but he always remembered to be just before he was generous.

'No, Sir Guy,' said he firmly; 'I can at present make no prospective arrangement to that extent. The disposition of my little ones must, like that of the bulk of my property, depend upon the future.' Then for the first time he unfolded to his father-in-law elect his pecuniary intentions with respect to Gwendoline. It was a matter on which the baronet had wisely abstained from questioning him. Mr Ferrier was a man much easier led than driven, and would have resented any dictation upon such a subject. Business matters were his strong point; and, on the other hand, he did not need to be told his duty. His intentions on the present occasion were what suited both with his natural liberality and his sense of right, though they by no means came up with Sir Guy's expectations. Mr Ferrier had arranged to supply Gwendoline with a handsome allowance for pin-money, and to

settle on her a good jointure; but he had no idea of materially injuring the prospects of his children. Moreover, he might have issue by Gwendoline herself, whose interests would have to be consulted.

The baronet could not altogether conceal his chagrin at this news; and if he had spoken the genuine feelings of his heart, he would have said something of this sort: 'It is not to be supposed that an ancient and third-rate personage like you, sir, can purchase so superior a being as my daughter for the same price, or anything like it, as a more eligible suitor. The least you could have done, in my opinion, would have been to settle half your property upon her; the other half would, even then, have been more than sufficient for your girls, and probably only made them the objects of designing fortune-hunters. Out of that you might, therefore, reasonably have given me (Sir Guy) a good lump sum, not in mere acknowledgment of my rank (for that, since we are to be so nearly connected, I waive), but in compensation to me for what I have expended on this young woman's education and attire, and various extras. I really do not see the good of the existence of people of your third-rate class at all, if we are not to make something out of you; and if I had only guessed what a faint sense you entertain of the honour done to you in this alliance with my family, by gad, sir, I would have taken my pig to another market.'

What Sir Guy did say was something very different. He remonstrated, it is true: he even took the serious and sepulchral line of his being an old man, and of the necessity incumbent on him of 'looking beyond himself;' but either because he was out of his element on such topics, and argued it ill, or because, since the bridegroom elect was as old as he was, the argument was ill appreciated, Sir Guy failed to move the other from his position; and finding no better terms could be made, he dismissed the whole matter with a good-humoured pleasantry.

In very different tones did he communicate the news that evening to his daughter, when their guest had left. He did not spare his future son-in-law, even in the way of epithet: 'The man is a mere skinflint, Gwendoline; and, for my part, I am quite prepared to throw him over, even at this eleventh hour. You have only to write a line to Lady Beaumonde, to say we're in town, and next week you may take your choice among the best in England. Depend upon it, my dear, we have made a mistake here altogether.'

'I think not, papa,' was Gwendoline's quiet rejoinder; 'at least, I have made no mistake.' And a look accompanied the reply, which said as plainly as any spoken words: 'You know, it was arranged that I was to shift for myself.'

Sir Guy seemed much cast down: abashed, it was not in the nature of things he should be.

'If you have nothing to do with yourself, papa,' she went on, 'or if I have put you to expenses that cripple you for the present, why should you not accompany us abroad?'

'What! On your marriage? On Monday week, Gwendoline? Surely that would be impossible.'

'Would it?' said she coldly. 'Well, at all events, join us as soon as it *will* be possible. I will take care that Mr Ferrier asks you to do so; and one of us at least will be glad to see you.'

Gwendoline was speaking truth there, and her father kissed her with trembling playfulness for her gracious words. He did not guess that almost anybody else would have been as eagerly welcomed to make a third in that coming honeymoon as himself.

'Yes,' said he, 'I will certainly make one of your party, notwithstanding that I understand those brats are to accompany you; and you know how children annoy me.'

'Marion, however, is a very well-behaved little girl, papa, and nobody will ask you to carry the baby. Paris—Florence—Rome; that is the programme, it seems; and we are to return to Glen Druid in the early autumn.'

She traced out the route as coolly as though she had been reading an extract from *Bradshaw*; and we may state, without accompanying the happy pair upon their travels, as Sir Guy did, that it was adhered to.

Mr Ferrier was not 'thrown over' at the eleventh hour, but married Gwendoline Treherne on the day appointed. Never had so quiet a wedding taken place before at St George's, Hanover Square. The fashionable world were astonished the next morning over their chocolate to read the news of such a ceremony having been performed in their absence, and rather resented it. 'But when a girl marries for money,' they charitably reflected, 'it is the bridegroom's wishes that have to be consulted until after he is secured.' They had no idea it was Gwendoline herself who had insisted upon the 'quietness' of the affair. That there were no bridesmaids, no breakfast, no anything, was all set down to the miserly eccentricity of the unknown Scotch gentleman of eighty or so (some said ninety), who had purchased the belle of the last season. There was one thing in which it was sarcastically observed that he was very generous: the fashion of 'no cards' had not as yet commenced; but the number of cards which the Ferriers sent out quite excited remark, it was so prodigious. No acquaintance of the Trehernes—and their circle of acquaintance was very large—seemed to have been omitted. But this, too, in reality, was as little to be laid to the bridegroom's charge as the rest of the arrangements. The bride was solely responsible for it. In doing so, she was sowing the seed of what she intended should be a vast harvest of popularity; she was casting bread upon the waters, of which she hoped to see the fruits after many days.

In most dramas, when the heroine marries, the curtain falls with 'They lived happy ever afterwards' inscribed upon it, or at least suggested by the last 'tag;' but the story of Gwendoline Treherne can admit of no such conclusion. She is married, it is true; but her life henceforth is no more to be predicated from that circumstance than the future of a man who takes the name and arms of another by the Queen's license, for certain considerations, is to be thereby foretold. With most women, marriage is the scheme of their existence, the capital of the column of life. With Gwendoline Treherne, it was but the first step of the pedestal.

Early in autumn, and after about six months of continental travel, Mr and Mrs Ferrier and the children returned to Glen Druid. It is sarcastically said that country folks have little to talk about except politics and one another; but so far they are little behind the town. The misfortune is that

they take their politics from tradition, or yesterday's newspaper (which is much the same), while they themselves are few in number, and—since it is only poets and fox-hunters (of whom the latter class is much more numerous than the former) who can live in the country—mostly of one type. The return of the Ferriers was an incident by the side of which all ordinary excitements of the neighbourhood—confirmations, family bazaars, and comings of age of the sons of the magistracy—paled their ineffectual fires. The curiosity of the county to see Gwendoline, and pass judgment on her behaviour as wife and step-mother, was extreme; and she did not balk them. The newly married couple went out everywhere; and when that duty had been thoroughly performed, they received everybody at home. Nothing could exceed Mrs Ferrier's urbanity and good-humour. Society could not reproach itself enough for having once thought her unconciliatory or reserved. How true it was that one should never pass hasty verdicts upon persons whom one has had no opportunity of knowing thoroughly! What was more satisfactory than all, was to see how sweet little Marion clung to her. It was not always that a young woman of beauty and fashion shewed herself in so amiable a light with respect to the whims and ways of children: and it was rarer still to see a second wife so entirely devoted to the offspring of her predecessor. Conversation of this sort took place for the most part among the ladies, and was generally followed by certain significant smiles and whispers, the nature of which we are far too polite to reveal. Indeed, they chiefly consisted of oracular and mystic sentences, not easy to be deciphered by masculine minds at all; such as, 'Nothing of the sort at present;' 'Quite a mistake, I assure you;' and (this from a high domestic authority, who had just been made a grandmother), 'Pooh, pooh; not likely.'

From reproaching itself with its old verdict upon Gwendoline, Society went on to reverse it. For what beside her cold and haughty manner—which it was now evident had been but the natural result of high birth joined to very slender means—had ever been really urged against her? Absolutely nothing, except some vulgar story about the sudden and harsh dismissal of her waiting-maid from Glen Druid. The girl was a great talker, had made some bitter complaints, and even invented some scandals, against her mistress before she went away; but if one is to listen to the tattle of discharged domestics, what mistress's character would be safe? And, talking of servants, could anything be more admirable than Mrs Ferrier's conduct—it was but a small thing, but it was very significant of her magnanimity of character—with respect to Susan Ramsay that was, who had been turned away from Glen Druid for her impertinence to her, when Miss Treherne? One of Mrs Ferrier's first acts upon her return home was to send little Marion down to St Medards to see her old nurse; which not only shewed a forgiving spirit, but proved how genuine had been her own affectionate treatment of the child. For of course the artless infant would pour into Susan's greedy ears all her woes and wrongs, if she had had any, and give quite an unvarnished account of her new mamma. Yet even Susan Barland—who was very well known among the families in the neighbourhood, for she was an excellent dressmaker,

and eked out her husband's income by that calling—had confessed that little Marion was very fond of her step-mother, and had nothing whatever to say against her. It was surely a great feather in Gwendoline's cap that she nourished no 'bitterness,' which so often exists in people that ought to be far above it. Then, again, to see her with the baby—little Eady—it was the most charming sight in the world: the clergyman at St Medards had said it was 'an education in itself;' never had such a step-mother been seen before—at all events in West Cornwall. If Gwendoline had been dead and buried—a calamity shocking to reflect upon, when one remembered those two motherless lambs—the gilded record of virtues upon her tombstone, which would doubtless have been as complete as the art of composition could make it, could scarcely have been excelled by the golden opinions that were now expressed of her.

As to her behaviour as a wife, it was perfect—it was beautiful. It was agreed upon all hands that never before had old man been so fortunate in the choice of a second spouse as Mr Ferrier. It was also remarked that he was looking very old.

#### BETTER-HALF BARTER.

IN savage lands, women are so far merchandisable articles that a young man anxious of setting up an establishment of his own is expected to give the papa of the lady of his choice something handsome in the way of cattle, or whatever may be the favourite currency of the country, as an equivalent for the loss of her services. A custom somewhat inconvenient in its results, leading, as in Kafirland, to much discontent among the young men, from the rich old men buying up all the wives, as they are able to outbid younger wife-seekers—an evil the legislature of Natal has sought to check by fixing the price of a wife at twenty cows. Even in civilised communities, the selling of daughters is not entirely unknown. An English lady travelling in Portugal was horrified by a wealthy Moor offering her a good round sum for her beautiful daughter, an incident evoking from the narrator the remark: 'How we revolt from appearances instead of realities. A proposal to buy her daughter would shock any European parent. But if a man of superior rank or fortune offered himself, though his intellect, morals, and appearance were all contemptible, would there be the same horror entertained of selling her?' Certainly, in openness and honesty, the savages have the advantage; and it must be owned that they never seem to entertain the idea of selling a woman after they have made her a wife.

That idea is one, however, that has been entertained and carried out often enough in England; and what is more strange still, the perpetrators of the offence appear to have believed they were doing nothing contrary to the law of the land when divesting themselves of a partner of whom they were tired, by such a simple and inexpensive mode of divorce. A correspondent of *Notes and Queries* attempted to account for the popular belief in the legality of transactions of the sort, by saying it sprang out of the long war ending in 1815, when many soldiers and sailors returning home, found their wives, supposing they were dead, had re-married. To get out of the difficulty arising from the unwelcome appearance



of so many Enoch Ardens, it was declared to be lawful to sell the wife in open market, when the second husband made his marriage good, by purchasing her, and the first one became free to marry again. We fancy the writer in question would find it difficult to prove that such dealings were ever declared lawful; and unfortunately for his theory, disposing of a wife by sale was practised in England long before the era of Napoleonic wars.

In Grimaldi's *Origines Genealogice* is to be found the following curious document, dating back more than five and a half centuries: 'To all good Christians to whom this writ shall come. John de Camoys, son and heir of Sir Ralph de Camoys, greeting.—Know me to have delivered and yielded up, of my own free will, to Sir William de Paynel, Knight, my wife, Margaret de Camoys, daughter and heiress of Sir John de Gatesden. And likewise to have given and granted to the said Sir William, and to have made over and quit-claimed all goods and chattels which the said Margaret had or may have, or which I may claim in her right; so that neither I, nor any one in my name, shall at any time hereafter be able to claim any right to the said Margaret, or to her goods and chattels or their pertinents. And I consent and grant, and by this writ declare that the said Margaret shall abide and remain with the said Sir William during his pleasure. In witness to which, I have placed my seal to this deed before these witnesses: Thomas de Depeston, John de Ferringo, William de Icombe, Henry de Biroun, Stephen Chamberlayne, Walter le Blound, Gilbert de Batecumbe, Robert de Bosco, and others.' Despite its signing, sealing, and witnessing, this precious deed was declared illegal and invalid by parliament itself. In later times, Lord Hardwicke had occasion to issue an information against a gentleman for disposing of his spouse by private contract; but what came of it is not recorded. Another instance in which formality was invoked occurred in 1773, when three men and three women went to the *Bell Inn*, Egbaston Street, Birmingham, and made the following entry in the toll-book kept there: 'August 31, 1773. Samuel Whitehouse, of the parish of Willenhall, in the county of Stafford, this day sold his wife, Mary Whitehouse, in open market, to Thomas Griffiths of Birmingham; value one shilling. To be taken with all her faults. Signed, Samuel Whitehouse, Mary Whitehouse. Voucher, Thomas Buckley, of Birmingham.'

In 1803, one Smith took his wife from Ferrybridge to Pontefract, a distance of twenty miles, and put her up for sale in the market-place; the biddings were started at twelve pence, and she was knocked down at eleven shillings, the spirited purchaser leading his bargain away by a halter, amid showers of mud and snow from the spectators. A fellow at Tuxford let his wife and child go for five shillings; and in 1859 a similar scandalous exhibition took place at Dudley, when the wife was put up by auction at three-halfpence, and sold to the highest bidder for the sum of sixpence.

In the above cases, the wives seem to have fallen to chance buyers; but generally the affair was a prearranged one between the buyer, the seller, and the sold, who seem to have salved their consciences by going through the ceremony of a mock-auction. On Valentine's Day 1806, a man named Gowthorpe exposed his wife for sale in the market at Hull, at one o'clock in the day; but the mob interfered

with such effect that he was compelled to withdraw her. However, in the evening, he again brought her out, and sold her for twenty guineas to a man who had lodged at his house for some years. In 1764, a man and his wife got into conversation with a grazier at Purham Fair—a conversation resulting in the man offering to exchange his better-half for a bullock, if he might choose one for himself from the drove. The grazier agreed, and the lady readily acceded, and the next day was duly delivered up, with the inevitable halter round her neck, the husband taking his bullock away, and afterwards selling that too for six guineas. In 1844, a Glamorganshire labouring man, after living very unhappily with his wife for some time, discovered that she sought solace in the affections of a neighbour. To make the best of a bad matter, he called upon his rival, and after an amicable discussion, agreed to sell the cause of it to him. The following Saturday, he accordingly appeared in the market with his wife, attired in a new black gown and a white bonnet, with a halter round her neck, and then and there handed her over to her paramour upon payment of two shillings and sixpence—in this instance an unvirtuous wife proving half-a-crown to her husband; and we are told the purchaser always boasted it was the best bargain he ever made in his life. Not so successful in their arrangements were another couple, whose disappointment was made public in the *Stamford Mercury* of the 26th November 1858: 'On Monday, a disgraceful exhibition—the attempted sale of a wife—took place in front of a beer-house at Shearbridge, Little Horton, near Bradford. The fellow who offered his wife for sale was Hartley Thompson. She was a person of prepossessing appearance. The sale had been duly announced by the bellman, and a large crowd assembled. The wife appeared with a halter, adorned with ribbons, round her neck. The sale, however, was not completed; the reason for this being, that some disturbance was created by a crowd from a neighbouring factory, and that the person to whom it was intended to sell the wife was detained at his work beyond the time. The couple, though not long wedded, have led a very unhappy life, and it is said they and their friends were so egregiously ignorant as to believe they could secure their legal separation by a public sale.' In 1863, a workman at the Cyfarthfa Ironworks sold his wife to a fellow-workman for two pounds ten shillings in cash, and ten shillings to be spent in drink. The wife appeared more amused than pained by the performance, and went home with her purchaser, after enjoying her share of the beer.

One fickle wretch was deservedly punished. Having parted with his spouse for a quarter of a guinea and a gallon of beer, he was disgusted to hear, a few weeks afterwards, that she had, by the death of a relative, come into a little fortune of two hundred pounds. Only a few years ago, a bachelor in easy circumstances, living at Dittisham, a village on the banks of the Dart, took a strong fancy for the wife of one of his neighbours; and after some negotiation, it was agreed, between him and the husband, that he should take the lady for fifty pounds, her baby been thrown into the bargain; and the newly-mated pair soon set off on a sort of wedding-trip. The husband, however, found he had been sold, for, after having delivered up his wife, his customer went off without paying for her,

and the deluded scamp was left lamenting. In 1766, a carpenter, who had sold his wife, hung himself upon her refusing to return to his repentant bosom, on the plea, that she was perfectly satisfied with the result of his trading.

The women concerned in these singular transfers seldom seem to have made any objection. We have only met with two instances of the lady proving rebellious. Mrs Waddilove was one of these exceptions to the rule. Her husband, an innkeeper at Grassington, agreed to dispose of her to a Mr John Lupton upon payment of one hundred guineas—the highest figure a wife is recorded to have fetched—the latter depositing one guinea in earnest of the bargain. When he went the following day to tender the remaining ninety-nine guineas and receive the fair dame, to his dismay, she flatly refused to allow herself to be delivered up; and the disappointed wife-buyer was obliged to depart as wifeless as he came; while, to render his discomfiture more mortifying, mine host declined to refund the earnest-money. The husband was the sufferer in our second instance. He was a young man hailing from Bewcastle in Cumberland, who, finding it impossible to live comfortably with his spouse, resolved to give somebody else the chance of doing so, by disposing of her by public auction. Not being successful in finding a customer in his own neighbourhood, his wife suggested that he should try Newcastle. They went there; and the wife so contrived matters that certain gentlemen employed on his Majesty's service—very pressing service—introduced themselves to the husband, and he found himself one fine day safe on board a frigate bound for a long cruise in distant waters; and so the tables were turned, and instead of getting rid of his wife, she got rid of him.

By law, the selling of a wife counts as a misdemeanour; and in 1837, one Joshua Jackson was convicted of the offence at the Sessions in the West Riding of Yorkshire, and got a month's hard labour for his pains.

A young and sprightly widow once appeared at a Bath masquerade with a paper pinned to her bosom bearing these lines:

To be let on lease for the term of my life,  
I, Sylvia J—, in the shape of a wife:  
I am young, though not handsome, good-natured,  
though thin—

For further particulars pray inquire within.

In the *Gentleman's Magazine* for 1788, the taking a lady on lease is treated as a sober reality; a Birmingham correspondent of Mr Urban's writing: 'Since my residing in this town, I have often heard there is a method of obtaining a wife's sister upon lease. I never could learn the method to be taken to get a wife upon lease, or whether such connections are sanctioned by law. But there is an eminent manufacturer in the vicinity of this town who had his deceased wife's sister upon lease for ninety years and upwards; and I know she went by his name, enjoyed all the privileges, and received all the honours due to the respectable name of wife.' Birmingham would appear to have a speciality for extraordinary contracts of this nature. In 1853, a woman who accused her husband of assaulting her, in giving evidence before the magistrates of that town, said she was not living with the offender, because he was leased to another woman. For the satisfaction

of the bench, the agreement was produced; it ran thus: 'Memorandum of Agreement made and entered into this second day of October, in the year of our Lord 1852, between William Charles Capas, of Charles-Henry Street, in the borough of Birmingham, in the county of Warwick, carpenter, of the one part, and Emily Hickson of Hurst Street, Birmingham, aforesaid, spinster, of the other part. Whereas the said William Charles Capas and Emily Hickson have mutually agreed with each other to live and reside together, and to mutually assist in supporting and maintaining each other during the remainder of their lives, and also to sign the agreement hereinafter contained to that effect. Now, therefore, it is hereby mutually agreed upon, by and between the said William Charles Capas and Emily Hickson, that they shall live and reside together during the remainder of their lives, and that they shall mutually exert themselves by work and labour, and by following all their business pursuits to the best of their abilities, skill, and understanding, and by advising and assisting each other, for their mutual benefit and advantage, and also to provide for themselves and each other the best supports and comforts of life which their means and income may afford. And for the true and faithful performance of this agreement, each of the said parties bindeth himself and herself unto the other finally by this agreement, as witness the hands of the said parties, this day and year above written.' For this precious document, five-and-thirty shillings had been paid to some unscrupulous limb of the law. It may be hoped it is unique; but one must allow the agreement, so far as it goes, is a fair one, and is just such a deed as may be expected to be drawn up between man and wife in the happy coming time when the clamorous preachers of the equality of both sexes of man shall have altered the laws affecting matrimony to the utmost of their desires, and established connubiality upon a proper commercial basis.

#### HOPE ON.

THE ceaseless rain sweeps on  
Over the darkening sea;  
The ceaseless wind is rushing by—  
What is all to me?  
I sit alone in the house,  
Where, some short years ago,  
We each were bright, and happy, and young—  
And has all ended so?  
There is nothing to care for now;  
There is nothing to hope or fear;  
There is only left of all the past  
The memory of those who were.  
Over the distant lands  
The graves rise here and there;  
And I, sad sitting here alone,  
Can only fancy where.  
Oh, peace, rebellious heart!  
Heaven is bright above:  
There is thy home, there are thy hopes,  
And there are those you love!  
Is there nothing to care for now?  
Sickness, and sorrow, and sin;  
Are there not these to soothe or to stay?  
Is there not Heaven to win?

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